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These perhaps add something of value. One is less sure of the wisdom of printing the parallel texts of Acts at the bottom of the page.

S. M.

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**An Introduction to the Life of Jesus:** An Investigation of the Historical Sources. By ALFRED WILLIAMS ANTHONY, Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Criticism, Cobb Divinity School. Boston: Silver, Burdette & Co. 1896. Pp. 206.

This little work comes opportunely. Probably no time has ever equaled ours in its concern over the evidence that goes to establish the trustworthiness of the sources which contain the facts of the life of Jesus. While we have had many books upon apologetics, those which have dealt exclusively with this form of evidence have not been numerous, or at least sufficiently readable. Professor Anthony's work is, therefore, welcome as an attempt to meet the need.

His aim is not to discuss the times or the circumstances of Jesus' life, but to present the evidence upon which we may accept the historicity of our gospel accounts. He therefore has gathered together and discussed such statements of heathen and Jewish writers as bear upon this point; he has examined the apocryphal gospels, *agrapha*, patristic writings, and the epistles of Paul and the gospels. By this process he has presented a great number of the most important facts that give weight to a belief in the validity of Christian faith, and has incidentally discussed the synoptic and Johannine problems. If we overlook occasional stylistic peculiarities, the work must be said to have been well done. We cannot agree with the author's conclusions in regard to the synoptic problem, but this is not the most important portion of the book. Professor Anthony has really given us a book upon documentary Christian evidences admirably adapted for use by thoughtful men and women who are not professional students, as well as by students just beginning the study of the life of Jesus. In this particular it will be serviceable if used in connection with the handbook of Professor Gilbert (*The Student's Life of Jesus*) noticed in the October number of the BIBLICAL WORLD.

S. M.

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**Die Propheten in ihrer ursprünglichen Form. Die Grundgesetze der ursemitischen Poesie erschlossen und nachgewiesen in Bibel, Keilinschriften, und Koran, und in ihren Wirkungen erkannt in den Chören der griechischen Tragödie.** Von DR. D. H. MÜLLER. I Band: Prolegomena und Epilegomena, pp. 1-256. II Band: Hebräische Texte, pp. 1-70, Arabische Texte, pp. 1-64. Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1896. M. 16.

The characteristic features of ancient Semitic religious poetry according to Professor Müller were mainly four: (1) strophical structure; (2) *responsion*, or the correspondence of strophes, the so-called *parallelismus membrorum*

on a larger scale ; (3) *concatenation*, or the linking of the last line of a strophe to the first line of the following one ; (4) *inclusion*, or the rounding off of a strophe as a whole. These characteristics, he maintains, are common to the Koran which though relatively late represents ancient literary methods better than the works of the Arabian poets who were affected by Greek influence, the cuneiform inscriptions, and the Hebrew prophets. The chorus of the Greek tragedy, which seems to have borrowed elements from the East, probably grew out of Semitic choral odes exhibiting these peculiarities. All this is thought to point to poetic forms current among the Semites before they were broken up into the three peoples who produced the three literatures mentioned.

These propositions are supported by a large number of illustrations, most of which are given in the original as well as in German, and which are all printed as it is supposed they were written. The responsions, etc., are indicated by various typographical expedients. The cuneiform passages are taken from the Babylonian creation epic, the creation text recently discovered by Mr. Pinches, and the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser I, Nabu-abal-idin, Assurbanipal, Sargon, and Nebuchadnezzar the Great. The specimens from the Koran are far more numerous, representing as many as seventeen Suras. The examples from the Hebrew prophets are arranged in the first volume in the following order : Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Hosea, Zephaniah (which is given entire), Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah. In the second volume they are placed as they stand in the printed Hebrew Bible. Fewer portions of Isaiah are cited than might have been expected, the texts covering only eight pages. Deutero-Isaiah, on the contrary, gets sixteen. Illustrations are also given from the prophecies of Balaam and the teaching of our Lord as recorded in the synoptic gospels. The samples of Greek tragedy examined are drawn from twenty plays : four of Æschylus, five of Sophocles, and eleven of Euripides. They are mostly cited in German, but a specimen of each poet is given also in the original.

The impression left on the mind of an unprejudiced reader by this large collection of passages and Dr. Müller's comments is on the whole distinctly favorable to the general outlines of his theory. The main features of the correspondence which he claims to have discovered between Arabian and Assyro-Babylonian documents seem to rest on a foundation of fact. Many of the details, however, are extremely uncertain. The strophical arrangement, for instance, is often by no means proved, and some of the alleged responsions, etc., fanciful. It is also not plain why the Hebrew writings usually considered poetic are left out of the inquiry. Another unfortunate circumstance is the appearance of the book before the publication of the elaborate dissertation of Professor Friedrich Delitzsch on the Babylonian creation epic<sup>1</sup> in which the structure of early Babylonian religious poetry is

<sup>1</sup> "Das babylonische Welterschöpfungsepos von Friedrich Delitzsch." Leipzig : S. Hirzel, 1896.

carefully examined on the basis of evidence supplied by the tablets themselves.

It is to be hoped that the strongly adverse critique from the pen of Professor Smend, which appeared in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, will not prejudice students against this learned work, which handles an interesting theme very freshly and instructively. The arrangement of the Hebrew text, however conjectural in many places, unquestionably helps the reader to grasp the meaning; and many of Dr. Müller's remarks are very helpful and suggestive. It is only fair to add that the two volumes are beautifully printed.

W. TAYLOR SMITH.

**The Empire of the Ptolemies.** By PROFESSOR J. P. MAHAFFY, D.D., LL.D.  
New York: The Macmillan Co., 1895. Pp. xxv + 533. Price \$3.50.

The period of which this book treats is one of great interest and of surpassing difficulty. The Egypt of the Ptolemies was a most extraordinary Egypt. The conservatism of the native Egyptian, fortified by thousands of years of a glorious history, came into close contact with the progressive Greek mind, and under the control of Greek kings, inspired with the intellectual and political achievements of the people that had produced an Aristotle and an Alexander. The result is most instructive. The Ptolemies show the Greek political sagacity in their dealings with the Egyptians, and their interest in the intellectual development of Egypt develops a literary and scholastic atmosphere which makes Alexandria the center of the literary life of the time. The old Egyptian religion is given full swing; the priests retain their prerogatives; the Ptolemies build on the temples like old Pharaohs and receive from the religion entrance into the Egyptian heaven and deification among the Egyptian gods.

A special interest attaches to this period because of the fact that a large Jewish population is found in Egypt and receives especial favor from these kings. The Jews have their part in the intellectual fermentation of the age. It is here under the genial patronage of the Ptolemies that a great Jewish literature is produced, the chiefest monument of which is the Septuagint.

The period, however, is one of extreme difficulty because of the lack of satisfactory historical memorials, the intricacy of the political relations, and the absence of any commanding historical writer of the time to describe and to interpret for us the changing scene. Professor Mahaffy has made this period of ancient history the subject of several important historical works such as his *Greek Life and Thought from Alexander to the Roman Conquest*, *The Greek World Under Roman Sway*, and the volume on *Alexander's Empire* in "The Story of the Nations" series. This book, however, is the latest and best contribution which he has made to the subject. Mahaffy has a peculiar method of writing history. He is discursive, garrulous, and at the same time does not hesitate to insert in the body of his